

*Liaison Links is the quarterly newsletter of the Seattle City Attorney's Precinct Liaison Program*

## Inside this Issue

- Welcome from the New City Attorney
- Meet the New Liaison
- West Seattle Problem Club Closes Its Doors
- Collaborative Effort Tackles Greenwood Problem Business
- South Precinct Drug Paraphernalia & Dangerous Weapons Project
- Community Effort Blocks Pioneer Square Liquor License Assumption
- 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry Task Force Makes Headway
- McDonald's at Third and Pine Closes for Re-Development
- Teamwork Gets Results on Abandoned Vehicle Legislation
- Third Community Stakeholder Survey in the Mail

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## Liaison Links

### Welcome From the New City Attorney



#### By Tom Carr

In the following pages you will see some of the exciting work that our precinct liaison attorneys are doing to respond to community concerns. I am honored to inherit such a worthwhile and effective program. In the years to come I hope to build on the successes of the past and ultimately to expand the program to reach all of our communities. Those successes have been accomplished by our dedicated team of precinct liaisons as well as by the active involvement of community leaders like you. Rest assured that I am an enthusiastic supporter of the program.

I am pleased to be able to announce further details of a new federal grant that will allow us to expand our presence in the South, East and North Precincts. As you will read in more detail below, Ed McKenna, a talented prosecutor with 12 years of service in our Criminal Division will join our team as the new North/East Precinct Liaison. In the expansion, the South Precinct will have a fulltime liaison attorney, the East Precinct will have a liaison attorney three day per week, and the North Precinct will have its first precinct-based liaison attorney two days per week.

I am proud to serve as your new City Attorney. My principal goal is to work together to solve our problems. I have spent some time in each of the precincts where I have had the opportunity to meet many of you. When people sit down and talk to each other in an atmosphere that encourages openness, honesty and respect, most problems can be resolved. I welcome your feedback, suggestions and ideas. I can be reached at 206-684-8288, or via e-mail at: [thomas.carr@ci.seattle.wa.us](mailto:thomas.carr@ci.seattle.wa.us)

## Meet the New Liaison

By Phil Brenneman & Bob Hood



Ed McKenna, The New East/North Precinct Liaison

We are pleased to announce that City Attorney Tom Carr has selected **Ed McKenna** as the new full-time precinct liaison attorney for the North & East Precincts. We anticipate finalizing the DOJ grant that will fund this position and having Ed assume his liaison duties by **approximately July 1<sup>st</sup>**. Ed is looking forward to tackling public safety and community livability issues in both precincts. We wish Ed great success in his new role.

Ed was born in Seattle and was raised both here and at the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana. After attending Nathan Hale High School, he graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in Psychology. Ed received his law degree from the University of Puget Sound Law School (now Seattle University Law School) and took additional law courses at Notre Dame.

Before joining the City Attorney's office in 1990, Ed worked as a legal intern with the State Board of Tax Appeals and in private practice specializing in civil litigation and post-conviction criminal litigation.

Ed has been with the City Attorney's Criminal Division for the last 12 years where he has worked in all phases of criminal prosecution. He has also served as the Graffiti Prosecutor, a role for which he was recognized with the *Outstanding Inter-Agency Partners Award* from Seattle Public Utilities in 2000.

Ed is actively involved in the community. He serves as a part-time administrative law judge, hearing appeals of property taxes and commercial valuations for the Board of Tax Appeals. He has been a volunteer high school and law school mock trial judge, a student mentor, and has worked as a volunteer at the Lake City Legal Clinic. He is also a *Christmas in April* volunteer, a program designed to help senior citizens repair or remodel their homes. Ed has also served as the Vice President of the Northwest Indian Bar Association.

Ed's leisure time activities are varied. He is a member of the Northwest Motorcycle Association and the Blue Ribbon Coalition. He also enjoys traveling to historical old-west sites, camping, off-road motorcycling, and remodeling houses.

On a related note, we would like to express our special thanks to **Captain Mark Evenson** of the East Precinct who spent many hours with us conducting the initial interview rounds for the position and for making finalist recommendations. Mark's interest and insights helped us to bring this selection process to a successful conclusion.

As a final note, we would also like to recognize and thank **Kirk Davis** for all of the fine efforts and contributions he has made to the Precinct Liaison Program. He has done an excellent job in addressing community concerns and working on problems despite carrying other fulltime responsibilities with the Criminal Division, and more recently, with the Civil Enforcement Section. He continues to play an important part in our transition to the new expansion. Given his knowledge and experience, we look forward to having precinct liaisons work with him in his current role with the Civil Enforcement Section.

## West Seattle Problem Club Closes Its Doors

By Trish Nellermoe

On Saturday nights in West Seattle during 2001, the *Caribe* was a problem club that was the center of fights, underage drinking, car accidents, drug dealing, and noise disturbances. The owners, a married couple, allowed a promoter to run the club on

Saturday nights and the promoter's employees admitted underage individuals into the club. Although one of the owners (the wife) was present on these Saturday nights, she failed to stop minors from being admitted. The neighbors of the *Caribe* suffered virtually every Saturday night, often not sleeping until the early morning hours when the club finally closed for the night.

The neighborhood had suffered long enough. South Precinct police officers, working with liquor enforcement agents, documented five administrative violations, including three violations for allowing minors on the premises. The other owner (the husband) was convicted in federal court of one count of Conspiring to Distribute Heroin and three counts of Distribution of Heroin. He was sentenced to approximately nine years in prison. The City of Seattle objected to the annual renewal of the owners' liquor license. State liquor enforcement agents requested administrative cancellation of the liquor license based on the administrative violations and the Liquor Board denied renewal of the license. The wife appealed the Board's denial, but later decided to withdraw her appeal, giving up her license.

The wife subsequently decided to quit her lease on the property and so, to the delight of long suffering neighbors, the *Caribe* ceased to exist.

## **Collaborative Effort Tackles Greenwood Problem Business**

**By Phil Brenneman**

A collaborative effort by SPD, DCLU and the precinct liaison attorney has successfully cleared junk cars plaguing a Greenwood neighborhood. Junk vehicles associated with an area auto and truck repair business, were scattered around the neighborhood creating an unsightly hazard. Neighbors in the area reported that the problem had been ongoing for years. Prior attempts to bring the business into compliance had been unsuccessful.

Undeterred, the North Precinct Liaison Attorney, SPD, and DCLU worked together to devise a new strategy. Notices of violation issued by the DCLU were issued after the property lines of the auto repair business were surveyed and it was determined that the business owner was using city property to park the cars under his control and conduct his repair business. These notices were issued following a meeting with the owner of the business by CPT Officer Jon Dittoe and the precinct liaison attorney.

These violation notices had their intended effect. The owner was finally prompted to move the illegally parked vehicles and store them properly. As a result, the appearance of the neighborhood has improved. The Greenwood

Neighborhood Group wrote to Mayor Nickles commending the efforts and results of Dru Hardee at DCLU, Officer Jon Dittoe and Kirk Davis, the North Precinct Liaison Attorney, for their long and successful work on this problem.

## **South Precinct Prepares for Drug Paraphernalia & Dangerous Weapons Project**

**By Trish Nellermoe**

Ongoing complaints from West Seattle residents about open drug use and use of dangerous weapons near mini-marts have prompted the South Precinct Liaison Attorney and the South Precinct Community Police Team (CPT) to initiate a project targeting the sales of drug paraphernalia and dangerous weapons. One of the important goals of the project is educate mini-mart owners about what items are illegal to sell and to insure that such sales cease. These sales can also form the basis of an administrative violation notice by the State Liquor Board against a mini-mart that has a liquor license.

The commonly sold drug paraphernalia are narrow glass pipes used for smoking crack cocaine. These pipes often encase a fabric or macramé flower and are usually sold with screens or small pieces of steel wool. Dangerous weapons sold include throwing stars, chako sticks and knives.

All mini-marts in West Seattle will be included in the project. CPT officers will visit each mini-mart and meet each owner in person. Officers will provide each owner with copies of statutes which prohibit sales of drug paraphernalia and dangerous weapons, identify items that are illegal, and advise them of their responsibility to comply with the law by not selling such items. They will also be told that future violations will be prosecuted.

If an officer determines that illegal goods are offered for sale during the first visit, the store will be revisited within two weeks to determine if the store is complying with the law. If the project proves successful, it may be expanded to other parts of the city.

### **Community Effort Blocks Liquor License Assumption**

**By Shelley Hickey**

Many members of the Pioneer Square community and the City of Seattle successfully objected to an assumption of a mini-mart's liquor license while the store had a pending violation for illegal sale of alcohol to a minor. In 2001, the Washington State Liquor Control Board ("Liquor Board") cited Saveway Market located at 109 Occidental Ave. S. for selling alcohol to minors on two separate occasions. Shortly after the store received the second notice of violation, the licensee's daughter submitted an application to assume Saveway's liquor license.

Although Saveway paid a fine for its first sale to a minor, it faced a potential suspension of its license for the second violation. Generally, four violations within a two-year period are necessary to cancel or substantially suspect a license. Approval of the assumption by the Liquor Board would have effectively wiped the slate clean for Saveway allowing the business to start fresh with no violations.

Both the City and the community, through the Pioneer Square Community Association, submitted objections to the daughter's application for assumption. The main concern was that the ownership and management of the store would not change and that Saveway would not be held accountable for the second sale to a minor due to the proposed licensee change.

On January 24, 2002, the Liquor Board denied the daughter's application for assumption. Both the community and the City consider the Liquor Board's decision to be a huge boost in recognizing that a business that has the privilege of holding a liquor license must be held accountable to operate in a safe, respectful and lawful manner.

A licensee's ability to easily transfer a liquor license to a relative or friend to escape pending violations is just one of the enforcement problems currently being raised with the Liquor Board thanks to the diligent efforts of community groups throughout the West Precinct. Those groups

include the Downtown Seattle Residents Council, the Metropolitan Improvement District, the Downtown Seattle Association and the Pioneer Square Community Association.

### **25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry Task Force Makes Headway**

**By Trish Nellermoe**

Economic revitalization is an important part of the ongoing project at 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry and efforts to revitalize the area are starting to bear fruit. Ollivette Wade, the Seattle Weed and Seed Program Manager, recently announced that the businesses in the 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry business district would share a \$5000 grant with other businesses in Seattle Weed and Seed areas. The grant money may be used for facades, security lighting, window security film, graffiti removal, fencing, signage, dump fees, and landscape modification.

The 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry area will also be included as a possible recipient in another grant application to the Metlife Foundation. The Metlife Foundation is offering 6 prizes for community development, safety and security totaling \$130,000. Longer-term revitalization plans for the area include creating a business improvement district along 23<sup>rd</sup> that would include the 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry business district.

Increased enforcement is another important facet of this project. Many city departments have contributed to the effort to reduce

crime in the area. The East Precinct has been deploying additional resources to the area including the mobile precinct and the bike squad when they are available. During December, Captain Evenson, Lt. Dermody, Lt. Meehan and the East Precinct Liaison attorney walked the neighborhood and met with business owners in the area. The Seattle Parks Department continues to be a strong partner in the effort to discourage crime in the area and allows the 25<sup>th</sup> and Cherry Task Force to meet in the Garfield Community Center for free. Rick Lindsay from SPD Crime Prevention and Jordan Royer, the NATS Manager, also continue to work with Seattle City Light to increase security lighting in the block.

### **McDonald's at Third and Pine Closes for Re-Development**

**By Shelley Hickey**

McDonald's at Third and Pine has agreed to close for approximately thirteen months pending completion of redevelopment of the 1524 Fourth Ave. Bldg. It has been closed since mid-January 2002. The location has long been a gathering place for drug activity according to the local community and Seattle Police Department. Despite past joint efforts by community/City to work with the owner to reduce drug traffic, public safety issues at this location have continued to plague the community and drain police resources. Temporary closure of this business allows the community a much

needed respite and provides the City and the community with a new opportunity to work on improving this area and to coordinate with a new owner re-opening this business sometime in 2003.

### **Teamwork Gets Results on Abandoned Vehicle Legislation**

**By Trish Nellermoe**

Thanks to the teamwork of Mariana Quarnstrom, John Leers, Lois Grammon-Simpson, Officer Aaron Reynolds and many others on Senate Bill 6748, we have a new tool to tackle abandoned vehicle problems that plague the South Precinct. This new law makes it a \$250 infraction to fail to redeem an abandoned vehicle. If all associated penalties and restitution are not paid, the owner's driving privileges will be suspended. SB 6748 makes it much more difficult for people to abandon vehicles on our streets without any accountability. In addition, this law makes it more difficult for abandoned, dilapidated vehicles to be sold at auction, abandoned, and resold again.

Prior to the new law, because the Department of Licensing did not have the correct ownership information on abandoned vehicles, people who abandoned vehicles on the street had little risk of being caught. Although a purchaser at an abandoned vehicle auction was required to notify the Department of Licensing that he is the new owner, many chose not to

so. If the vehicle was later abandoned, ownership could not be traced to the purchaser.

To address this problem, the new law requires the registered tow truck operator to send an abandoned vehicle report (AVR) which includes purchaser information to the Department of Licensing when an abandoned vehicle is sold at auction. When the AVR is submitted, the previous owner is relieved of liability for the operation of the vehicle from the date of sale and liability is transferred to the purchaser. In addition, to address the issue of revolving door vehicle abandonment, the new law allows the registered tow truck operator to authorize the disposal of an abandoned junk vehicle if the vehicle has been abandoned two or more times and the registered owner is the legal owner whose ownership has not changed since the first abandonment.

SB 6748 also allows the registered tow truck driver to refuse to accept a bid at an abandoned vehicle auction where (1) the bidder is currently indebted to the operator; (2) the operator has knowledge that the bidder has previously abandoned vehicles purchased at auction; or (3) the bidder has purchased more than four vehicles in the last calendar year without obtaining title to any/all of them.

The new law goes into effect on June 13, 2002. This is a great result after four years of hard work by all of those involved.

**Third Biannual Community Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey**

**By Bob Hood**

As part of a continuing effort to assess and improve the effectiveness of our community prosecution approach, our third Community Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey is in the mail. The survey, which was mailed to over two hundred persons and entities connected with the precinct advisory board

process in each of Seattle’s four police precincts, attempts to gather opinions about the operation of our program.

If you receive the survey, please take a couple minutes to fill it out and mail it back to us in the enclosed, postage-free, self-addressed envelope. Your feedback will help us to meet conditions in our federal grant and give us further information on how to improve the operation and effectiveness of our program.

**[Editors Note]**

Our apologies for the late delivery of the latest issue of *Liaison Links*. We thought it was important that we report the outcome of the new precinct liaison selection process and report important details regarding the implementation of our latest community prosecution grant before going to print. The next issue should be back on schedule by the end of June.

If you have comments or questions about *Liaison Links*, suggestions for issues we could cover, or other feedback, please call either Bob Hood at 684-7771 or Phil Brenneman at 684-8224. To get additional hardcopies of *Liaison Links*, or to change or add names to either our mailing or e-mailing list, please call Cami Bayer at 684-8864.